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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/542,400	07/15/2005	Yasuji Yasumitsu	Q88748	3038
23373	7590	12/18/2008	EXAMINER	
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037			SALVATORE, LYNDA	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER			
1794				
MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE			
12/18/2008	PAPER			

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/542,400	YASUMITSU ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	LYNDA M. SALVATORE	1794	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 November 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicant's request for continuing examination (RCE), amendment and accompanying remarks filed 11/7/08 have been fully considered and entered. Claim 1 has been amended as requested and claims 2-4 are canceled. Applicant's amendments are not found patentably distinguishable over the cited combination of prior art and Applicant's arguments are not found persuasive of patentability for reasons set forth herein below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Amundson et al, WO 00/38565 in view of Schmidt et al., US 6,278,037.

The published PCT application issued to Amundson et al., teach a composite laminate comprising two outer polyethylene layers bonded to an inner polypropylene layer (page 2, 5). Said laminate is suitable for use as a wipe. Said inner polypropylene layer may also comprise a blend of synthetic and natural fibers (page 2, 25). Amundson et al., teach a coform ratio blend of synthetic to pulp fibers ranging from 50:50 (page 5, 30 and page 6, 1). With regard to the air-laid limitations, Amundson et al., teach various forming methods including an air-laid method (page 4, 8-15). With regard to the basis weight limitations, Admundson et al., teach layers having a basis weight ranging from 25-120 g/m² (page 10, 30). Also, Admundson et al., teach basis weights of the

individual layers (outer/inner/outer) of 10/80/10 g/m² respectively (page 11, 5). Such a composite would inherently meet the total basis weight limitations recited. With regard to the heat bonded limitations, Admundson et al., teach attaching the individual layers by a thermo-mechanical process (e.g., heated rollers) (page 10, 10). It is the position of the Examiner that such heating would inherently impart heat bonding of the synthetic fibers.

The published PCT application issued to Amundson et al., teach bicomponent fibers, but fails to teach the claimed bicomponent fibers. However, such fibers are commonly known in the disposable garment art. For example, the patent issued to Schmidt et al., teach an absorbent article comprising polypropylene/polyester or polyethylene/polyester having a length ranging from .3-7.5 cm and a fineness ranging from .4-20 dtex (column 11, 19-38). With specific regard to the sheath/core orientation, Schmidt et al., teach a sheath of polyethylene and a core of polyester (column 11, 19-35). Schmidt et al., specifically teach that such fibers provide thermal bonding due to the low melting sheath component (column 11, 5-20). It is the position of the Examiner that invention of Amundson et al., and the invention of Schmidt et al., is from the same field of endeavor, namely disposable articles.

Therefore, motivated by the desire to provide a composite disposable article having thermal bonding abilities it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the composite article of Amundson et al., with the bicomponent fibers taught by Schmidt et al.

The combination of Admundson et al., in view of Schmidt et al., fails to teach the claimed ratio of the lengthwise and crosswise direction strength, the ratio of the strength in a dry state to that of a wet state and the water absorption properties, it is expected that the disposable absorbent article provided by the combination Admundson et al., in view of Schmidt et al., would exhibit the claimed ratios once the disposable absorbent composite is provided. Support for said presumption is found in the use of like materials such as the claimed polymeric bicomponent, synthetic and natural pulp fibers and the use of like processes such as forming a multi-layer composite having the claimed basis weight ranges and fiber ratios, which would result in the claimed strength and absorption properties. Applicant is invited to prove otherwise.

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LYNDA M. SALVATORE whose telephone number is (571)272-1482. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Milton Cano can be reached on 571-272-1398. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

12/17/08
Art Unit 1794

/Lynda Salvatore/
Primary Examiner